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BEDFORD — As one bridge approaches completion, work on another is set to begin soon.

Bob Dillon, project coordinator for the county highway department, provided updates on I Street bridge and Williams bridge during Tuesday morning's meeting of the Lawrence County commissioners.

"We still have to demolish the old I Street bridge and do some grading but we've been waiting for the farmer to get his crops out first," he explained. "That's why we haven't completed that project.

Commissioner Dave Flinn complimented Dillon and his crew for their work.

"I've heard a lot of good comments about that project," he said "I haven't heard a complaint yet."

"It's definitely a big improvement," Dillon said. "It turned out pretty well, and I'm pleased with it. It might have been nice to have a little straighter alignment, but then you are creating a hazard with speed." Dillon noted Williams bridge is scheduled for the state's February levy.

"That's when they will award the contract," he explained. "We have taken care of the right-of-way issues. Everyone has their checks. "Unless the state pulls the funding, we should be fine. I don't anticipate that happening. We're ready to go. They want to get this thing done as much as we do."

The commissioners also:

- Approved a grant for \$300,000 for radio equipment.

"This is a grant from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security that was funded at the federal level," explained Valerie Luchauer, director of emergency management. "This will fund 800 megahertz portable and mobile radios for all our police agencies.

"This is the largest grant we've ever received. We should get the equipment in 30 to 60 days."

- Approved a proposal by Joe Dibert, community corrections director. to have Dave Smith and Sheila Wright replace Tim Sledd and Linda Grove Paul on the community corrections advisory board.

- Approved a recommendation by Dan Lucas, head of the highway department, and Sheriff Sam Craig to establish a 20 mph speed limit on Steve Earl Road.

- Heard a report from Craig about continuing upgrades at the jail.

"I spoke with a consultant and he suggested the county conduct a feasibility study in regard to remodeling the jail," Craig said. "We have some major decisions to make. If we decide on a big project, it could take two to three years to complete the project."

Craig also reported the population at the jail continues to be high.

"This is the longest run in population I've seen since I took office," he said.

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County officials show off new emergency center

Thursday, October 16, 2008

By MARIBETH WARD, Staff Writer

Putnam County's new Emergency Operations Center hosted an open house this week with a flag raising ceremony and tours.

Local dignitaries and Senators Connie Lawson and Amos Thomas who were instrumental in helping to attain funding for the project attended the event.

More than 60 people attended the invitation only ribbon cutting at the new center including numerous contractors and emergency management staff.

"All kinds of people were here from contractors to big wings. It is a great joy, given the current climate of the economy to have so many different people come together for a common goal for the common good," said EOC Manager Dave Costin.

Putnam County Planner and Emergency Management Director Kim Hyten and Costin went to Senator Connie Lawson several years ago with the blessing of the county commissioners, requesting a change in the law to allow Putnam County to use funds from the State's Hazardous Waste Fund to finance the center.

Putnam County has one of only two hazardous waste sites in Indiana. It is located on S.R. 236 in Russell Township.

The two testified in front of both the Indiana Senate and Congress relaying the reasons for building the 911 center which is years ahead of its counterparts, and for using the money from the hazardous waste fund to finance it.

For every ton of waste deposited in the site, the state gets 75 percent of the \$11.50 per ton fee. Putnam County gets the other 25 percent (\$1.50).

"The county received \$1.2 million one year and averages about \$1 million a year generally," said Costin.

The monies from this fund cannot legally be used for any other projects such as roads, property taxes or other issues. This means Putnam County residents are not paying for the facility.

In addition to housing the county's 911 center, the new facility will house the command center for emergencies like tornadoes, flooding or other disasters. It will be used for all types of emergency training and it has a generator that will keep the 911 Center and the County Highway Department up and running in a disaster.

It includes a training room with five 74-inch flat screen televisions, a smart board, projection capabilities, computer ports and a projection screen,

"The tower is twice the strength of the old one. The entire center has been designed to grow with the county and should fit the needs of the area for the next 50 years," said Hyten

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Rural home burns to the ground

Oct 15, 2008 (Zionsville Times Sentinel - McClatchy-Tribune Information Services via COMTEX) --

A farmhouse in the 8500 block of East County Road 100 North was completely incinerated by flames early Monday morning, Oct. 13.

The Zionsville Fire Department received a call at 2:54 a.m. on a house fire in Union Township.

"The crew arrived to see it had been burning for some time," ZFD Chief Jamie VanGorder said. "It had collapsed before the first call was ever received."

ZFD was aided by the Lebanon, Center Township, Worth Township, Sheridan and Carmel fire departments, as well as the Boone County Sheriff's Department. According to a press release from ZFD, fire crews had to shuttle water from four miles away using several large fire department tanker trucks.

Authorities have been unable to contact the home's owner, Renata Kulionis. ZFD and the sheriff's department investigated the scene Monday, and VanGorder believes nobody was in the home when it caught fire. Kulionis is the owner of Renata's Alterations, a tailoring and alterations shop on West 106th Street in Carmel. VanGorder said there is a sign posted outside the shop indicating the owner is on vacation.

According to the press release, the fire has been ruled as arson by the Boone County Fire Investigation Task Force, the Indiana State Fire Marshal's Office and the Boone County Sheriff's Department. The investigation is ongoing, as authorities continued to search the site for signs of arson throughout the day Monday.

Boone County Sheriff's Department Public Information Officer Chris Burcham was not available for comment Monday.

The Boone County 9-1-1 Communications Center advised ZFD they had received multiple calls on the fire.

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Independent contractors help with flood inspections

Wed. October 15, 2008; Posted: 06:10 PM

Oct 15, 2008 (The Times - McClatchy-Tribune Information Services via COMTEX) -- [SBCO](#) | [Quote](#) | [Chart](#) | [News](#) | [PowerRating](#) -- Structural housing inspectors from across the country are in Northwest Indiana assisting FEMA with inspections.

The Federal Emergency Management Bureau, [Small Business](#) Administration and state officials have been in the region since the president declared Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties disaster areas, paving the way for federal funds to help individuals and businesses whose property flooded as a result of the three days of torrential rain in mid-September.

Jean Riendeau, FEMA public affairs field manager, said Tuesday that the [contractors](#) work at companies across the country who contract with FEMA to do housing inspections.

FEMA has said it will try to have contractors out within 24 to 48 hours. Once the contracted inspectors come in, they get the names of people who have registered with FEMA and contact those individuals so they can go out to their homes to conduct the inspections and review the damage.

"The contractors will be in Northwest Indiana until the job is done, and we're never really sure how long that will be," Riendeau said.

Several contractors have come to the region from a company called Parsons Brinkerhoff Construction Services Inc. The company is headquartered in New York, but workers involved in the local effort at from Houston.

Meanwhile, FEMA officials said people who are not U.S. citizens but are in the country legally may be eligible for disaster assistance.

Stephen DeBlasio Sr., federal coordinating officer, said, "We don't want any residents who might be eligible to miss out on valuable disaster assistance that could help them get back on their feet." If in doubt, apply for assistance and FEMA will determine eligibility, DeBlasio said.

Disaster assistance is available to residents and [business owners](#) in 16 Indiana counties -- Clark, Crawford, Dearborn, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Knox, Lake, LaPorte, Lawrence, Martin, Pike, Porter, Spencer and Switzerland. Applicants must be U.S. citizens, noncitizen

nationals or qualified aliens to receive FEMA monetary assistance. Their legal status will not be jeopardized by applying for assistance.

Finally, the [Small Business Administration](#) reported it has approved nearly \$1.4 million in loans for home and business owners in Indiana who incurred damage from the storms. To date, 10,602 of the administration's loan application packets have been sent out. Of that number, 9,269 went to homeowners and 1,332 went to business owners. To get help

The Federal Emergency Management Agency reminds people who have property damage from September's storms to apply for help online at www.fema.gov or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), or TTY 1-800-462-7585.

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14 Indiana counties approved for federal assistance

Updated: Oct 16, 2008 05:30 PM EDT

Indianapolis - Gov. Mitch Daniels' office says President George W. Bush has approved 14 counties for federal public assistance for damage sustained by severe weather that began September 12.

They are: Clark, Crawford, Dearborn, Fayette, Harrison, Jefferson, Jennings, Lake, Porter, Ripley, Scott, Switzerland, Washington and Wayne counties

Public assistance means state government and local governments and certain non-profit organizations in these counties are eligible to apply for federal assistance to pay 75 percent of the approved cost of debris removal, emergency services related to the disaster and repairing or replacing damaged public facilities, such as roads, buildings and utilities.

Daniels indicated further damage may be identified and reserved the right to request assistance for additional counties.

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October 16, 2008

4 Ind. counties added to disaster declaration

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS - President Bush on Thursday added four southern Indiana counties to a federal disaster declaration following severe weather from the remnants of Hurricane Ike.

Approval means residents and businesses in Floyd, Perry, Scott and Washington counties may qualify for individual aid that could include household assistance, disaster housing, and U.S. Small Business Administration loans.

The governor's office said Gov. Mitch Daniels also will ask the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow emergency food stamp distribution for storm victims. Southern Indiana was raked by high winds beginning Sept. 12 that left hundreds of thousands of people and businesses without power and forced many to throw out or replace refrigerated food.

The approval brings to 20 the number of counties included in the disaster declaration following flooding and storms associated with remnants of Hurricane Ike last month.

The state will designate locations for disaster services. Meanwhile, residents and businesses in the four counties can begin applying for FEMA assistance by registering online at <http://www.fema.gov/assistance> or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers are available 24 hours a day.

Also Thursday, President Bush approved federal public assistance to 14 counties damaged by storms and flooding last month.

The counties are Clark, Crawford, Dearborn, Fayette, Harrison, Jefferson, Jennings, Lake, Porter, Ripley, Scott, Switzerland, Washington and Wayne.

Approval means governments and some non-profit organizations in those counties can apply for up to 75 percent the approved cost of debris removal, repairs to public buildings and roads and emergency services related to the severe weather from remnants of Hurricane Ike.

A news release from the state says Daniels still may ask the federal government for assistance for additional counties as needs are assessed.

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Governor requests federal aid for 3 more counties

Thursday, October 16, 2008 | 10:09 AM

INDIANAPOLIS -- Gov. Mitch Daniels has asked President Bush to add three southern Indiana counties to a federal disaster declaration following severe weather from the remnants of Hurricane Ike.

A statement from the governor's office says Daniels on Wednesday asked Bush to add Perry, Scott and Washington counties to the list of disaster areas, qualifying residents there for individual assistance. Southern Indiana was raked by high winds beginning Sept. 12 that left hundreds of thousands of people and businesses without power.

Daniels has requested federal aid including disaster housing, unemployment assistance and U.S. Small Business Administration disaster loans.

Bush has approved disaster aid for 16 Indiana counties. Last week, Daniels asked that Floyd County be added to the disaster declaration.

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October 16, 2008

Harrison, Clark to get public disaster aid

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — President Bush today approved federal public assistance to Harrison, Clark and 12 other counties that were damaged by last month's windstorm or other weather problems spawned by Hurricane Ike.

Bush also approved Floyd, Perry, Scott and Washington counties for federal assistance for homeowners, renters and businesses that were damaged by the weather.

That raised to 20 the number of Indiana counties designated for individual assistance, according to Gov. Mitch Daniels' office. Harrison and Clark were among those designated earlier.

The other counties approved for public aid today were Crawford, Dearborn, Fayette, Jefferson, Jennings, Lake, Porter, Ripley, Scott, Switzerland, Washington and Wayne.

Approval means governments and some non-profit organizations in those counties can apply for up to 75 percent of the approved cost of debris removal, repairs to public buildings and roads and emergency services related to the severe weather.

Daniels had requested the aid. A news release from the state said Daniels still may ask the federal government for assistance for additional counties as needs are assessed.

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SBA Approves Nearly \$1.4 Million in Loans to Disaster Victims

Thursday, October 16, 2008; Posted: 06:30 AM

Oct 16, 2008 (DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS/ContentWorks via COMTEX) -- [SBCO](#) | [Quote](#) | [Chart](#) | [News](#) | [PowerRating](#) -- INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. -- Officials of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced today that \$1,394,900 in loan monies have been approved for home and business owners in Indiana who incurred damage and loss in the severe storms and flooding that occurred between Sept. 12 and October 6. To date, 10,602 SBA loan application packets have been sent out - 9,269 to homeowners and 1,332 to business owners. These SBA packets were sent out in response to those people having applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for disaster assistance.

To begin the process of being considered for various types of federal, state or other assistance, residents in disaster-declared counties need to call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), or TTY 1-800-462-7585 for the speech or hearing impaired. Phone lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and multilingual operators are available at all times. Disaster victims also may apply online at www.fema.gov.

Disaster recovery officials from FEMA and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) urge disaster victims who have applied for assistance and received an SBA disaster loan application to complete and return it as soon as possible. Even if they do not want a loan or assume they don't qualify, anyone who receives an SBA loan application must complete that application in order to be considered for other grant programs.

"It is important for Hoosiers to know that disaster loans from SBA are not just for small businesses," said Steve DeBlasio, head of FEMA recovery efforts in Indiana. "SBA is the primary source of federal long-term disaster recovery funding for private property owners, including homeowners, renters, non-farm businesses of all sizes and private non-profit organizations. In fact, the majority of SBA disaster loans are made to homeowners and renters," DeBlasio added.

SBA loan amounts are based on the actual cost of repairing or rebuilding a damaged home or business and replacing damaged personal property, minus any insurance reimbursements or benefits from other agencies or organizations for the same loss. However, disaster victims do not have to wait for their insurance settlement before applying for an SBA loan.

Businesses of any size and private non-profit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets. SBA can also lend additional funds to help with the cost of making improvements that protect, prevent or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future. And, for small businesses, SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. This assistance is available even if the business suffered no property damage.

SBA customer service representatives are available at disaster recovery centers throughout the disaster area to issue loan applications, answer questions about SBA's disaster loan programs, explain the application process and help each individual complete their application. For information about how to complete a loan application, or for more information on their disaster loan programs, call the SBA at 1-800-659-2955 or log on to www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

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